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ABSTRACT

The tremendous impact and potential of mass media must be put to work efficiently before it is too late. The mass media can increase dissatisfaction with the status quo and move the world forward; they can lessen dissatisfaction and provide bases for understanding existing values and goals; they can give the world an understanding and stimulation in a totally new structure of communication resources. Some crucial areas where mass media could have great effect are the inner-city vs. suburbs struggle, formal education, international communications, and inter-group communications. The controllers of the communications industry are in a position of great responsibility. (Author/RH)

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THE INFORMATION/MOTIVATION INDUSTRY: RELEVANCE, REVOLT AND RESPONSIBILITY

An Address to the American Management Association Conference

on Information Market Opportunities in the 1970's

March 12, 1969, at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York City

by

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(Dr. Hilliard's comments are his own as a private individual and do not necessarily reflect the approval or endorsement of the FCC or the FIBC.)

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The impact of the mass media is undeniable. Even those who deny it are affected by it.

The school systems, for example. We wonder why we have growing revolt and resentment on the part of students, at all levels. We wonder why we cannot reach the child in the inner-city, and why compensatory programs--as the U.S. Civil Rights Commission has reported--have not worked.

That is because formal education is irrelevant to the society in which it exists. Not only are content and curricula irrelevant, but methods and technique are irrelevant. And this is what the student--and we have learned these are the brightest students--are revolting about.

This can be applied to all aspects of American society, and to the world as a whole. Emerging nations have learned much more quickly than we have, in their sudden, dramatic development of television, radio and films for information, education and motivation.

Let's look at some of the implications of what is happening, in a global level and on an inter-personal level.

Mass media are slowly making the world into a global village. Picasso, in his cubism, reflected the many sided, simultaneous views of objects, people and ideas that communications and transportation created in the 1920's. Now, 50 years later, in the 70's, we have this on an intensive world-wide level.

The market opportunities of the 1970's are already here. Except that the term market opportunities is only partially correct. What we are talking about are the socio-political-economic needs of the world and of the United States in terms of mass media information-education-motivation.

The term market too frequently relates to product. What you people are dealing with is service. Service to the advancement of human progress in peace and individual and group self-realization. In meeting these needs, you provide products--machinery, software, guidance, consultation: whatever it is you do best to serve humanity in an area that I believe--and I hope you believe, too, or you shouldn't be in this field--is the most important at the present time for the survival and progress of mankind.

We need not review the important contributions of the media--you know them. Suffice to say that we are all agreed that these media have the greatest potential for affecting the minds and emotions of mankind. A recent study by the National Industrial Conference Board predicts that the impact of the mass media in affecting people's individual and group values and goals will reach its maximum in the early 1970's. (I believe we may reach a new peak then, but I think the field will continue to grow for many decades.)

What kinds of impact?

Certainly in terms of individual attitudes and behavior, and individual development. The child has seen through television, for example, a new world, a world outside of and beyond the four walls of the rat-infested room of the ghetto and beyond the equally oppressive four walls, blackboard and chalk and lecture-oriented room of the schoolhouse.

The media, by having shown to many people what is possible, what is probable in the world for them, have created intense dissatisfaction in many areas of private and public attitude.

To what degree are you prepared to provide those motivating products and services that will 1) increase this dissatisfaction with the status quo and move the world forward; or 2) will lessen this dissatisfaction and provide bases for understanding those existing values and goals that should not be discarded simply for the sake of change; or 3) give the world an understanding and stimulation in a totally new structure of communication resources, devices, problems, solutions and impact, that seem to be emerging from an ever-increasing polarity?

Some specifics:

What services and products do you have now for the inner-city? Here is America's most critical problem--a lack of communication between the minority and the majority societies. A lack of communication that has literally prompted many leaders of the minority to develop a dual societal structure on the grounds that the majority society has refused to open itself as a pluralistic society--except in condescending, token and deliberate terms. (Before we respond negatively to that possibility, let's think about it not in philosophical terms, but in pragmatic terms. What would our reaction be if we were black and our opportunities were still totally restricted by a white-black relationship in business, in government, in education, in communications and in so many aspects of personal life--instead of being not a white-black, but a person-person relationship. And the more educated we were, the more we had learned from the mass media about what the world really has to offer, the angrier and the more oriented we likely would be to polarized action in developing individualization in the inner-city.)

The inner-cities need the information industry. (I prefer to think of it as the motivation industry, which goes far beyond the limited concepts of information. Giving information is what the nineteenth century teacher who dominates American education does in the classroom, instead of teaching.) The inner cities need information, education and most of all motivation, to provide an identification and self-pride and self-respect that has heretofore been largely missing from media prepared by the majority society for use by the minority society. But we cannot solve the problems of the inner-city by limiting our actions in the inner city. As I said at the American Management Association Education and Training Conference last summer, one of our principal efforts must be made in suburbia. The motivation industry has got to educate white America as to the causes of our intra-country strife and to motivate white America to take those public and personal steps that will eliminate the causes. Racism makes it impossible for a black to participate with equal opportunity for success or failure. Once we have eliminated racism, the polarity that threatens to lead our country into civil war will cease. Providing information and motivation to suburbia as well as to the inner-city is a priority goal for the early 1970's--except that if we wait until the 1970's it may well be too late.

I am not going to say much about the formal education business--and the way its vested interests have resisted progress since the development of the learning media over the past couple of decades. It is a business that would be thoroughly overhauled if it had to account to stockholders who had an interest in seeing it turn out successful products. Suffice

to say that the information/motivation industry is on the verge of a breakthrough in this area. The many parents and teachers and school administrators are, alas, burying their heads in the sand. But the kids do see what is happening, and are they making their wishes known. So you have two markets. One is to inform and motivate the parents and the teacher establishment into the twentieth century, so that they will be eager to make their schools and curricula relevant to the needs and problems of society today--which means the employment of media, and the freeing of the teacher to work individually with the students. In other words, to really teach, and not to waste his or her and the students' time and the taxpayers money by licturing and doing those other mechanical things that can be done at least as effectively by machines. The second market is one you really must be prepared for: to have ready those products and services, particularly software, that will provide the relevancy that is now missing and that the students, particularly in the colleges and universities, are now seeking on their own.

I must say, incidentally, that the reason why education is still in the nineteenth century and not using the technology and meeting the needs of the twentieth century is in our very hands.

We--all of us here--are directly responsible. Because it is those of us right here in this room who could achieve this progress in our own school boards and our own PTA's. I am going to be self-righteous for a moment. This year my wife is president of our PTA. Our PTA is in Washington, D.C.--one of the most backward educational systems in the country. For example, it is the only one of the 16 great cities that

still does not use TV as a regular part of its learning resources. Our school has resisted new technology. But through talking and studying and organizing and cajoling and aggravating--ourselves and others, we got the PTA and the school administration to at least consider modern learning and teaching methods. (Of course, in our school the manufacturer promised teaching machines months ago and they still haven't arrived, but that's another story, although one for you to think about.) If you really believe in the business you are in, are you and your colleagues and employees going to put your voices where your income is and stand up at the next meeting of your school board or PTA and help them understand what they need to do to bring your schools up to date. Do think about that. Because that is where your market will come from. The information-motivation industry has got to create the market.

We can go into similar discussions about a myriad of needs in the socio-political-economic worlds affected by education and training. There is no problem, no human purpose in this world that is not dependent on communication for optimum solution or achievement, and no area of endeavor that cannot be affected in a positive, humanitarian way by the effective use of communication.

Instant mass communications will also have a profound effect on international relations--economic as well as political. We will have to provide not only the technology that is needed for instant world-wide exchange of ideas and attitudes and feelings, but to develop materials for such an exchange. What will these materials be? Will they be oriented toward the purposes of a few people--government or industry--

who may control the communications means? That's a danger. Because if we allow the control of the communications processes to fall into the hands of a few men, then we are allowing them control of domestic and, to a great degree, international political processes and governments. Or will we be on guard to diversify control of the means of communications--with ultimate control, as is our current political process, in the hands of the people? Will we be vigilant in developing the kind of software--no matter how much we are bribed by the prospect of a lucrative account--that will maintain concepts of participatory democracy, that will forward the ideals of peace and freedom and self-fulfillment for all individuals and all peoples?

I touched briefly on inter-group communications, in discussing the increasing polarity in our society. The need for increased and more effective inter-group communication is growing, and although the critical need may not arrive as soon as that for those aspects I have already discussed, it is not too soon to begin planning for implementation of effective inter-group communication within the next decade. We see serious problems already: between the highly formally educated professional and the highly informally educated nonprofessional; between the manufacturer and the product dispensers and those who deal in services; between the elite and non-elite classes in many areas, including political and social; between the scientist and the artist; between the physical scientist and the biological scientist; between business and government; between one generation and the next; between us and those under 30. This phenomenon has always been with us, but because of the

growth of communications, we have become more and more aware of the differences. And also because of the growth of communications, we are more and more able to bridge the differences--if we are willing to make that effort. We will need better and more effective use of current technology, new technology, and clear and careful determination and implementation of software goals if we are to bridge the gap. If we allow these differences to grow and magnify, the consequences for the stability of our society are frightening.

I am reluctant to stop, as I think of other developments--centralization of data and the implied threat to individual privacy through such centralization; development of highly sophisticated comprehensive storage, retrieval and distribution systems of both information and materials; entirely new concepts of individual to individual communication. How soon will it be before our current inter-personal communications, principally through speech, may be replaced by some electro-chemical process permitting the exchange of brain waves? Will there be simultaneous multiple-channel communications between and among individuals? In two decades? Three decades? What will this mean to the total world structure and relationships?

It will come, and I leave it to your imaginations to determine what this means in terms of technology and its associated markets, purposes, services and products, and most, important, its humanistic needs and development of the individual.

Enough. Let's get back to the world we can hold in our hands and in our inventories--the 1970's. We have heard at this conference enough needs for and uses of communications media to say, with little hesitation, that in the next decade every city in this country will need hundreds of channels of communications and even small communities at least dozens to serve the wants, desires, needs and potentials. Where are these channels going to come from? Broadcast channels? Microwave? Cable? Is the wired-city concept feasible from physical and economic standpoints both? What about the laser? The quasi-laser? The holograph? Satellite to receiver? And the many other technologies of communication still in the heads of the youngsters on the college campuses who are fighting for the freedom to put their brain power to the relevant things of current society and not be restricted by the oppressiveness of four walled classrooms and irrelevant curricula and teaching-learning methods?

We will have to have new technologies. We will have to have increased and better use of current technologies. And we will have to work toward a true systems approach, where we use that particular means of communication that will best meet that individual communications need at the given moment.

How are we going to achieve these goals. We must promote as well as serve the needs. Where are we going to get the personnel who are trained and educated in the comprehensive area of communication, of the information-motivation industry? There currently exists no single

institution that does the necessary job. Where are we going to get the researchers, find the research sources and orient them to programatic implementation? Where are we going to obtain the consultants and the experimental laboratories that may be beyond the economic practicalty of any one individual corporation? Where are we going to obtain the highly specialized and relevant services for conferences, seminars and workshops?

The information-motivation industry cannot achieve what needs to be achieved now and over the next decade piecemeal--not with the duplication and tentativeness that occurs from a lack of centralized effort. As I have insisted during the past half hour, the information-motivation industry must influence the direction of information and motivation through communications before it can reach its optimum contribution in providing both hardware and software products and other services. The market is ready to be created, but thus far it has been growing in bits and pieces, fits and starts and has not been given the assistance it needs.

What is needed, particularly in formal and informal educational institutions and organizations throughout the country and throughout the world, is direct assistance in understanding and planning communications resources, and training and education programs in the form of seminars, workshops and courses for students, teachers and administrators who must be prepared to function in a communications world.

What is further needed is a significant public service--informing and motivating the people--the private and public people, in all walks

of life, and in all countries--toward the values and requirements of information-motivation communications, so that effective support may be engineered for world-wide orientation towards communications development.

What is also needed is internal orientation within the industry on a large and small scale. In fact, that's why you are here--to hopefully be able to take back with you some ideas and approaches that will enable you to help your colleagues understand some of the needs and techniques. For example, consider the value of a two week seminar on the international market for data centralization systems at which your representatives--product, service and user--would meet and work with their counterparts from foreign countries.

Similarly, we need implementational research, not only showing what the potentials in a given area are, but going ahead and setting up and perhaps even exploting those potentials.

Once this is done, then the information/motivation industry will be effectively discharging its responsibility to promote this vital purpose in America, and in the world, and at the same time will be ready to serve this need with the multitude of products and services that will be required.

Pie in the sky. Wishing thinking. It was to me a couple of years ago, when, considering these problems along with others in the communications field, I first developed and proposed a plan for an International University of Communications. Now, I think we are closer to meeting these needs. The International University of Communications is now under

way. Let me tell you briefly something about it.

There is not, in this country or anywhere in the world, a single center that offers to the student, to the communications industry, to government, to education, to the professions, to all the varied fields needing communications expertise, the kinds of communications education and training, experiences, research, and resource services most vitally needed--those I have just recounted to you.

The International University of Communications will be oriented toward research which can be implemented for public and private planning and development. The University will be oriented toward resources and services such as consulting, workshops, conferences and media dissemination. It will be oriented toward teaching, on a broad interdisciplinary level, on a degree and non-degree basis. Most important, it will be relevant to the world about it, toward the needs of the public, of industry, of government in the fields of communications information and motivation. It will be relevant in terms of curricula and content, and techniques and approaches. It will have no fear of student revolts.

It will provide, among other things, the services, research and education and training vitally needed for the optimum contributions and services of the information/motivation industry.

I believe that one of the most significant investments we can make today is to get the International University of Communications operational as soon as we can, maintaining the highest standards and services, not only for transmitting ideas, but for relating people with

people and countries with countries, and for reaching people with both content and non-content motivation.

I can't stress to you--and I guess I don't really have to--the importance of communications information/motivation to mankind's future. And you who are here, if you agree with me that communications is the most powerful force in the world, then you are the most important people in the world, because you control the communications, the motivation industry. We may wish to laugh it off as a platitude--the way we seek any excuse for a moment of relief from the oppressive burden of responsibility in a good Arthur Miller play--but I think it is not an exaggeration to say that the future for world peace and progress is in our hands as much as and probably more than in anyone else's.